***Press* Release**

The Meteorological Office

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MET. OFFICE FORECASTS STAND ALONE

World Area Forecast Centre (WAFC) London, based at The Met. Office in Bracknell, was the sole provider of aviation Significant Weather charts for the whole world yesterday. Under normal circumstances these charts are provided jointly by WAFC London and WAFC Washington under contract to the International Civil Aviation Organization. This is the first time that global aviation forecasts have been provided by one forecasting centre alone.

Yesterday, responsibility for all forecasts was handed to Bracknell while WAFC Washington, based at the US Aviation Weather Service in Kansas, moved accommodation. Each Centre provides forecast information to the world's airlines, and acts as a back up to the other in the event of an outage. This event provided a real opportunity to test The Met. Office's capability to generate and disseminate global information while services from WAFC Washington were unavailable.

Speaking today, after the operation was successfully completed, Clive Brimacombe, Manager of The Met. Office's National Met. Centre said: "This operation marks a milestone in our relationship with our US colleagues, and follows several months of co-operation between the two Centres."

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